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THE INTELLIGENCE WAR

KGB HAS PLAN FOR UN JOBS

BY ROBERT MOSS

ONE of the key decisions that the new United Nations Secretary-General will have to take is whether or not to accept a document known in UN circles as the "Bryntsev report."

The report—whose ponderous official title is "The Application of the Principle of the Equitable Geographical Distribution of the Staff of the UN Secretariat"—was issued last July by the joint inspection unit, a body created by the UN Secretariat in 1985 to monitor the activities of the different agencies in its vast international bureaucracy.

The report's main recommendation was that, in making staff appointments, the UN Secretariat should practise positive discrimination in favour of candidates from countries that are under-represented in relation to their population, even when these candidates are not as well qualified as other applicants.

The proposal flatly contradicts Article 101 of the UN Charter, which states that the overriding consideration in the choice of UN staff should be "the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity."

According to UN sources, the author of this controversial report was Alexander Bryntsev, a senior KGB officer who formerly served under diplomatic cover in Soviet missions to the UN and in the Russian embassies in New Delhi and Islamabad.

Bryntsev was assisted by a Soviet colleague in the UN inspection unit, Valeriy Yevstuguev, another identified KGB man whose attempt to compromise and recruit a fellow UN employee in 1979 led to a formal complaint being made to the Soviet ambassador.

Key posts

At first sight, the Bryntsev Report may look like a straightforward Soviet effort to curry favour with Third-World countries that are underrepresented on the UN staff. But there's more to it than that.

While Soviet citizens, including a high proportion of KGB and GRU officers, hold many key posts in the UN secretariat (especially in personnel division) the Soviet Union, surprisingly, is underrepresented, in relation to the total number of UN staff. If the Bryntsev Report becomes UN policy under the new Secretary-General, it would supply a handy pretext for the Russians to push their nominees, regardless of qualifications, into vacant UN posts.

Western diplomats say that the UN headquarters in New York and Geneva are the KGB's biggest "safe houses" in the Western world. Western secret services have no similar method of access to any Soviet bloc country. In New York, the FBI is barred from monitoring what goes on inside UN premises.

The Russians do not even pay lip-service to the notion that Soviet citizens employed by the United Nations are international civil servants. Russians working in the UN secretariat are required to turn over to their government any part of their salary that exceeds what they would earn in a comparable post in the USSR.

For obvious reasons, the Soviet authorities prefer that Russians should work for the UN under fixed-term contracts rather than as career officials with permanent contracts. This explains why the Bryntsev Report also advocates fewer permanent contracts and more fixed-term arrangements for employment in the UN secretariat.

Cuban spy

at UN

The Cuban secret services—the DGI and the parallel Americas department of the Cuban Communist party—also exploit UN cover for their operations in the United States.

A rough gauge of how busy they are is the fact that the Cuban mission to the UN currently holds the record for unpaid parking tickets in New York—5,688 summonses. A single member of the Cuban UN mission received 651 parking tickets.

One of the most active Cubans in New York is Alfredo Garcia Almeida, a short, gregarious man with a heavy moustache who holds the cover job of counsellor at the Cuban mission to the UN. His real assignment is as chief of the Americas department network in the United States.

In this capacity, he maintains liaison with a wide variety of American political and church-based organisations, such as the Centre for Cuban Studies in New York, and with journalists and congressional aides. Garcia Almeida has been especially active in recent months in promoting domestic opposition to Reagan administration policies towards El Salvador.

He travels widely around the United States, and is a frequent visitor to Los Angeles, moving around under the protection of armed bodyguards.